

"Love is a serious mental illness."

—Plato

Love Romances

The Widow and the Clockwork Heart

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First, they did away with the phones.

Then the tablets,
and then the cars.

Eventually, they
somehow ended
up with a world
where the view
in every direction
held a sunrise.

It can't be explained.
It can't be categorized.

It might simply be that
it was time for the world
to remember romance.

She was the Widow,
who could see only
ashes through the
eyes of her grief.
And he was the
Stranger, compelled
by her lost gaze.

Excuse
me, miss.

Are
you all
right?

Were it not a
fiction they likely
would never
have spoken.

I'm
sorry,
I...

Am
I simply a
spectacle, sir?
I fear that
I am.

More
mournful
than marvel,
I should
say.

Somehow, the people of the world decided to make, instead of better ways to escape the world...

...a world worth escaping to.

But there are still those, who, in grief or despair, can't see the brighter day.

Ah, yes, an inauspicious beginning, perhaps.

And instead of scorning them, instead of shunning them...

...we try to help them.

And that is when I, or one of my many cousins, am called.

Because I am the *Gear Man*.

And this is a clockwork heart.

Robot, please smile kindly and say, "Good morning."

The law of my people is we must never allow our charge, our mechanical person, to break character.

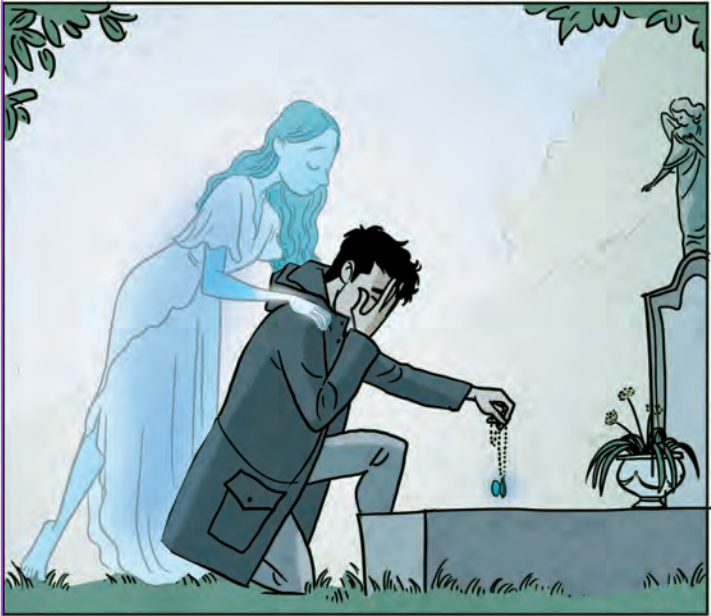
We must never allow the fiction to shatter, or the consequences are most terrible.

Best not to think of it.

There's a soul here that needs saving.

She is a Widow and he is a Stranger.

Deconstruction. Scrapping for spare parts.



Daly City, CA.
The near future.



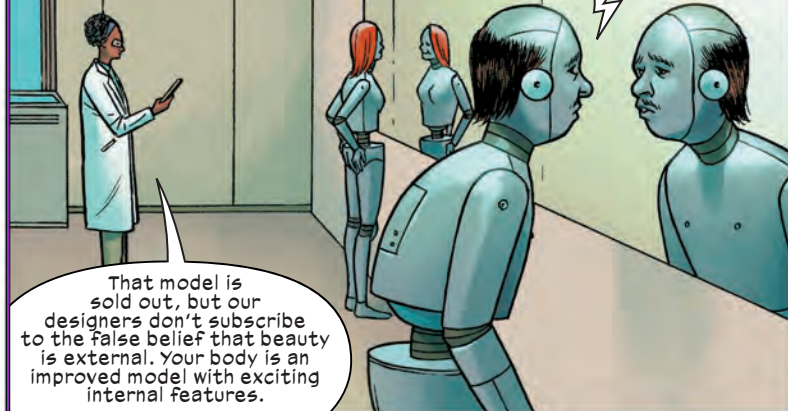
Richie, we should do this! We should get our consciousnesses transferred to robot bodies, don't you think? Then we won't have to worry about our love dying when we do.

You read my mind. I've already signed us up. We're becoming robots this weekend. Happy anniversary!



That weekend...

Wasn't I supposed to look like the robot in the advertisement? He was a little more traditionally attractive.

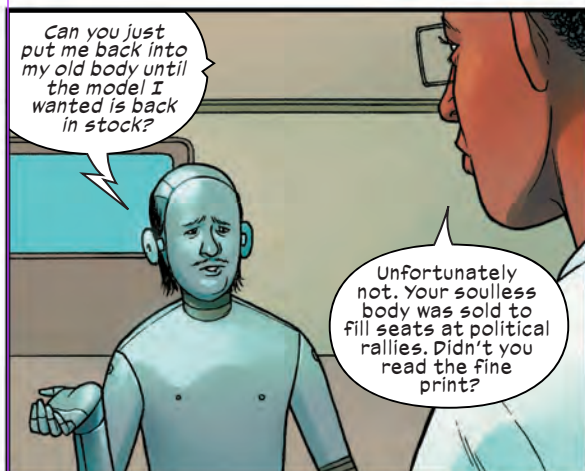


That model is sold out, but our designers don't subscribe to the false belief that beauty is external. Your body is an improved model with exciting internal features.

You're able to sweat, feel pain, and without any genitals there are fewer workplace misunderstandings. Your model is actually quite popular among stamp collectors.



Can you just put me back into my old body until the model I wanted is back in stock?



Unfortunately not. Your soulless body was sold to fill seats at political rallies. Didn't you read the fine print?

This is okay with you, right, Mona? You don't care what I look like, do you?

Uh...no. No. Of course not. Our love knows no bounds. I can still love you even though you look like that.

